

NEW BOOKS.

A Powerful Man of Georgia.
The character of the title in Mr. Will N. Hunter's story of "Pole Baker" (Harper & Brothers) was full of power. We suppose it might be called a plenipotentiary. It is a foolish Northern officer who took his company of forty colored soldiers to a hotel in Georgia with the idea that they would be permitted to go into the public dining room for their noonday repast. The soldiers were drunk as well as colored, but there is reason to believe that it was their conduct that constituted the important difficulty in the case. One of the soldiers, a tall black buck over six feet high and weighing about 200," said to old Mrs. Johnston, of the Johnston House at Darley, after she had explained to him that the house did not entertain colored people, that he and his comrades were going to have dinner in her hotel or know the reason why.

Capt. Duncan, a Georgian to whom this tale was related, exclaimed: "Good heavens! I thought to have been shot." He was pretty near to being. The citizens of Darley gathered in the office of the Johnston House as the Minute Men assembled at Lexington. In the words of Mr. Mayhew, the storekeeper at Springtown: "Every merchant and clerk that was any man at all showed a pistol in his pocket and quietly slid into his coat." A battle hung by a single hair. The white Northern officer stood leaning against the cigar case and watching his mistake superciliously.

In came Pole Baker on the run. He had been doing a job at whitewashing and wore a pair of somebody's old overalls. He went groping under the stove. Mr. Mayhew asked him what he was looking for. At that, in the words of the story, "he belched up an oath and said: 'Damn it, what do you think I'm looking for—a feather bed?' " Of course, he was looking for the poker. Not finding it, he grasped the bristling situation in his bare hands. He hustled the negro soldiers aside, went up to the white Northern officer, slapped him powerfully on the shoulder and said: "Looky here, you damned white coward, you order them coons out of here in five seconds or— with a further and profane emphasis that we omit. "I'll knock every tooth in your head down your throat and wedge 'em in with your gurs." The white Northern officer blinked and ordered his coons out. For all we know they were the same coons who ascended the hill at Santiago. Whatever the glory of their previous military history, they retired on the order of their commander from the Johnston House and from the terribly impending front of Pole Baker.

Pole seized the white Northern officer by the collar of his coat, yanked him about a little, to make sure of the complete awakening of his dull intelligence, read him a terse, strong lecture and despatched him forcibly after his coons. We have repeated the narrative, thinking it as good a way as any to indicate the militant side of Pole Baker. Pole of course was gifted with other sides. Readers of Mr. Harben's earlier book, "Abner Daniel," will recall how kindly a man he was, how gentle and sentimental, how rich in a homely and agreeably obvious philosophy.

They rewarded him for his brilliant labors in opposition to the black army that offered to dine at the Johnston House. Billy Asken, the leading publican at Darley, wiped out Pole's considerable account for drinks at his place. No man of Pole's heroic makeup could owe him for drinks, he declared. He added: "Pole Baker from this day on is at liberty to stick his mouth to every bunghole in my shop." We remark that that night they put Pole to bed in the Johnston House bridal chamber and sat with him till morning singing battle songs. The book makes a comprehensive and highly interesting story about Pole.

A Girl With a Way of Her Own.
Ruth Kimball Gardner's "Heart of a Girl" (A. S. Barnes & Co.) is one of the dangerous good books which will be widely read by little maids at school and will do them more harm than all the bad books censored from the prescribed list. There are no doubt morbid, egotistical girls like the heroine, Margaret Carlin, but they aren't real "nice girls" to put in books for other girls to read about. The record of their adolescent obliquities of temperament belongs to pathology and psychology, and should be confined to the study of physicians and mothers—adults immune from contagion. Every "misunderstood" girl and all half grown girls are misunderstood, or think they are—will find vindication and justification for their selfishness and vanity in the story of Margaret's final triumph.

As a child Margaret was a delightful and engaging companion. Her struggle with the multiplication table and mental arithmetic are endearing and pathetic. Her friendship for Major Winchester growing out of her belief that because he was called a "free thinker" he could teach her to obey the teacher's command to think herself as childlike and natural. But as Margaret advanced to that period of adolescence which is so trying to teachers and to the children themselves, the lovely little girl developed into an egotistical, restless, self-centred young woman, indulging in petty tempers and jealousies, small deceits, frantic loves and omitties and an inordinate craving for superiority.

Vaguely outlined in the dim background of the story is a wise and gentle mother who no doubt, "understands" Margaret perfectly. There was also a devoted older sister, unselfish and uncompromising, who would have been a sympathetic friend if Margaret had permitted it. But she carried on her own career of "self-realization" independently of either of these guardians, made her own friendship, with men, boys and girls, kept her own counsel in a way girls will think "ajlentid" and by her final triumph demonstrated her superiority and made herself a glorious example for all restless, turbulent girlhood to follow down the wrong way to theories of life that have to be reconstructed when they encounter actual experiences.

Real Hat Stuff. This Book.
"Duke Devil May Care," by Harris Dickson (Appleton), is a yellow covered dime shocker of the old school variety masquerading in a sombre binding and usurping the dignity of the legitimate novel. The scene of the story is the Mississippi Valley, which region, as the author remarks, was not settled by the Pilgrim Fathers. The Duke with the profane and significant title was a poker playing, cock fighting, whiskey drinking Southern planter, with a dynamic temper and red hot emotions. He ran away from school, was dismissed from the university, served in the navy, helped build two poor railways and to inaugurate two excellent revolutions in South America, before he settled down to manage his plantation with shotgun casualties. He was, moreover, young, chivalrous and fascinating. With such a hero the author has concocted a tale which will be no doubt a salable one to those who like "hot stuff" in fiction. The in-

PUBLICATIONS.



Lincoln and Lee

The "Lottery of Death" in November McClure's tells how Lincoln ordered to be hanged the son of General Robert E. Lee, then a Union prisoner of war, in retaliation for the threatened execution of two Union officers by the Confederacy. This prompt action of Lincoln's saved the lives of two innocent men. This is a bit of war history never before published.

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"The Larkins Wedding," by Alice McAllister (Moffat, Yard & Co.), is a new contribution to the "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch" school of fiction, which consists largely of monologues by a garrulous laundress who might have been Mrs. Wiggs's twin sister so far as pluck and good humor are concerned, but whose pen and philosophy are not as original as those of her prototype. The misuse and perversion of words which call for the laugh in Mrs. Larkins's conversation are not always mirth provoking, and by constant repetition her pet phrase, "the suds you belong to," loses significance and becomes tiresome.

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and wholesome and has already gone into a second edition. Her philosophy as embodied in her parting advice to her daughter at the wedding is sound and sensible: "I take it there ain't a man living or dead that don't need wheeling to keep 'em trotting along in the way of duty, calm and happy, and steady to what's best in the long run."

Continued on Eighth Page.

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